

The Norman Conquest

63

Val Demonc.¹ The Vuldi Mas«sara
covered the
west of the bland from where the
central ridge of
mountains dies into the leaner hills, it
contained
Palermo, and si retched to ("ape Hoeo;
here the
Saracens were most numerous. The Val
di Noto
covered the southern triangle of the
island, The
Val Demone wan formed by the great
chain of
the Apennines and Etna, a land of
innumerable
valleys and mountain fastnesses, its
eastern point
being Medina, Here survived a
remnant of the
former Bymnline population, and there
was a con-
Biderable clement in all the greater
towns of Sicily,
Enjoying freedom in trade tind the
practice of their
faith, the Christians were, htwever,
subjected to
the *getM*, a poll-lax everywhere imposed
by the
Modems upon those who would not
embrace Islam.
Three Arab tunirtt new divided Sicily,
indepem-
dent of on« another and of Africa, in
Mascara
Abd-alltth, i« Cttstrogiovanni llm-al-
HuwaH, in
SyracuHO Ibn-wt-Thnnah, and their
feuds invited
the foreign invnder. It wan in spring,
1060, that
Roger made his first attack upon
MeHsina but
neither then nor early in 1061 did he
meet with
succeKH. In May, iitf»i, however,

CHnwcard and
he iTOHHtid the Htruit wJth two
tlum«ind men, and
y folded tej them. Ilvnce. they were
guided

*VnJ hew «wt «*f uwuiw fU'wrtvly t*r tho ttiitiim far
"vftUt«y,"
and mu»t rncftut a w^jwi «f iwMw; vr» AnmH, .V/t»r«i
del Mttaul»
moM» in AVilWt v«t, i., p, 464, Thtt |#n»t muclmi
wuthonty fur
the* eattcjurtiit wf Sicily k Aft»rl, tho cwnnt«n{H»rnry
hbtorium isi